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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF/SPG, SE WILLIAMSON, NSC  
FOR BPITTMAN AND CHUDSON

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TAGS: [EAID](#) [KPKO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: SUDAN "FORMALLY ACCEPTS THAI AND NEPALESE UNITS,"  
WHILE DIMINISHED UN AGENCIES STRUGGLE TO KEEP UP

REF: KHARTOUM 1052

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) UN DSRSG for Humanitarian Affairs Amira Haqq and the entire UN agency team provided donor principals a comprehensive review on July 22 of the UN civilian presence on the ground in Darfur in the wake of their decision to go to Phase IV operations and draw down staff numbers as a precautionary measure before the July 14 ICC announcement. Haqq also notified Western ambassadors that UNAMID Force Commander Agwei "had formally been notified this morning" that Sudan accepts the sending of a Thai infantry battalion and Nepalese Formed Police Unit (FPU) as part of the UNAMID force.

¶2. (SBU) Haqq added that while 135 UN agency civilians had now been relocated to Kampala and a few others to Khartoum, the UN had decided to resume recruitment of national staff after it had been suspended after the July 11 drawdown. She pointed out that, after the UN had made its decision, the Khartoum regime had communicated to the UN that it did not want the mass withdrawal of UN personnel or NGOs from Darfur (as long as UNAMID "did not exceed its mandate" by trying to arrest ICC indictees). Although only about 5-10 percent of UN civilian agency staff was pulled out as part of Phase IV, and UNAMID ultimately did not pull out UNIPOL police, the pullout had certainly caused a negative impact on UN programs, especially in "recovery and development," while life-saving activities, such as WFP food distribution efforts remained at 100 percent operations targeting 400 different locations in the region. The reduced staff at many agencies will mean "less staff, more workload" with new initiatives and more long-term planning and programming less likely to occur. Phase IV had meant more security precautions, strictly enforced staff ceilings, UN-imposed movement restrictions, less supervision of projects and weakened monitoring overall.

¶3. (SBU) For example, after the July 11 drawdown, FAO's seed production activities would continue at 70 percent of the pre-drawdown level and livestock vaccination at 75 percent of the previous level. WHO's communicative disease control efforts would decline by 15 percent from before the Phase IV decision. UN agencies are trying to adapt by using more local implementing partners and NGOs, but in some cases those entities' capacity had also been diminished by withdrawal of personnel. UNHCR has now shelved plans temporarily to open a sub-office in Kutum and felt that an opportunity will be lost to push the Sudanese on their newfound flexibility in camp management and coordination in North and South Darfur states, "the opportunity is there, but where are the partners?"

¶4. (SBU) UNDP explained that its early recovery efforts focusing on human rights awareness and rule of law issues

will decline by 20-30 percent because of staff reductions and the difficulty of movement (restricted by the UN and not the Sudanese). Several donors, led by DFID, pressed Haqq and company about the possibility of moving back to a less restrictive environment in Darfur given that dire predictions of increased violence and regime harassment don't seem to have materialized. Haqq said that "the prognosis for going back to Phase III in Darfur is unclear." The question is whether the possible disruptive effect of an ICC indictment has been avoided or merely delayed -- until, for example, an actual arrest warrant for President Al-Bashir is issued. The UN doesn't know how quickly it can or should go back to a more permissive working model. "In any case, the UN always wants to work more with national partners, no matter the phase, " She added that the UN would be guided by input and analysis from the international community on the threat level.

15. (SBU) Moving to Abyei, Haqq said that the Joint Integrated Units are 100 percent positioned and trained. 90 percent of SPLA units have left the region and about 50 percent of SAF forces have departed so far. UNMIS has freedom of movement. Once SAF is fully out, people may begin to return by the Agok-Abyei road is now impassable because of heavy rains and the movements of SPLA tanks. Much work has been done -- Abyei hospital is intact and has been refurbished, some limited repair of hand pumps has occurred and food aid has continued unabated. But additional funding from the international community for Abyei has not yet materialized.

16. (C) Comment: While the news of the Sudanese Government letting the UN know that it accepts the Thais and Nepalese is

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a welcome development, this is more symbolic than immediately real given the logistical and transportation timelags for UNAMID. Of greater concern is that the UN agencies' precipitous drawdown seems to be having a more significant impact given the relatively small numbers involved. It is especially distressing that many of these diminished efforts seem to involve early recovery and development programs which are so needed in Darfur if it is ever to move beyond the emergency humanitarian phase -- development will, sooner or later, be an essential part of peace and reconciliation in Darfur. The UN seems to be resisting looking at "reverse tripwires" for reconsidering its July 11 decision until it sees whether Sudan is in a momentary lull before the ICC storm or if the regime intends to definitively follow a path of behaving as a responsible partner while it fights the ICC announcement against its head of state. End comment.

FERNANDEZ